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The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian

No. 264. JULY, 1929.

TRUTH — LIBERTY — RELIGION.

"Prove all things, hold fast to that which is good."

Editorial.

The Synod Meetings.

From a denominational point of view the most pleasing feature of this year's annual Synod meetings was the increased attendences. Can it be that our people are at last beginning to appreciate their splendid heritage? Let us hope that the high tribute paid to our faith, in the sermon that preceded the meetings and in the lecture that ended them, will be instrumental in bringing still more people to the meetings next year. There is still room for improvement. At the business meeting on Wednesday a long agenda was tackled in a business like way. Two items, by reason of their topical flavour, excited more than ordinary interest. The education problem was raised and discussed, resulting in a resolution that appointments of teachers in elementary and secondary schools should be according to qualification and not according to denominational standing. As suggested in these notes a short time ago such a public expression of opinion was most desirable in the interests of our Church. The drink question caused considerable discussion, the house being fairly evenly divided between prohibition and local option. Eventually a resolution was passed thanking the Northern Government for its beneficial and practical temperance legislation, and expressing the belief that the fairest way to deal with the liquor traffic was by a broad measure of local option.

The Ex-Moderator.

The retiring address of the outgoing Moderator (The Rev. W. G. Marsden) was an excellent example of comprehensiveness within brevity. In a short address of a little over ten minutes practically every important aspect of the Church during the last year was touched upon. We have heard much less included in much longer addresses on similar occasions. The main points of Mr. Marsden's retrospect were that the Church had gone steadily on its way, preaching and teaching the Christian Gospel, that women in increasing numbers were taking a more active part in the affairs of the Church, that the removal of so many ministers to congregations across the water was a matter of grave concern, and that the Women's League and the Laymen's League were to be congratulated on their work in connection with the Church.

The New Moderator.

Congratulations to the Rev. Glynne Davies of Comber on his appointment as Moderator of our Church. Dispensing with all conventional expressions of appreciation usual on such occasions, we may say that Mr. Davies has fully earned the honour. The Moderatorship is his by right, by length of loyal service to the Church, by ability, by his dignified bearing and, perhaps more important than all, by the high esteem in which he is held by his brother ministers. Mr. Davies, without saying a word on the subject, practically chose himself for the office. This is the highest compliment we can pay him. The tributes paid to him at the Annual Dinner were all richly deserved. With his usual modesty Mr. Davies, replying to the toast on his behalf, said that he regarded the honour not as personal, but as applying to the Church in which he ministered.

The Ulster Hall Service.

Why was the Ulster Hall not filled to overflowing on Sunday evening 16th June? Not counting strangers who usually attend on such an occasion, there were quite enough of our own household of faith to pack this large hall, if all had made the effort. The congregation was good (the hall being about three-quarters filled) but it should have been better. The service was certainly a success and there is not the slightest reason why it should not be an annual event in connection with the Synod Meetings. The hymn singing was most inspiring. The devotional part of the service conducted by the Rev. W. H. Townley Tilson, M.A., was reverently impressive while the address was of the elevating and uplifting kind that we have now come to expect from Mr. Cross. A short press report of the address is given elsewhere in this issue. Unfortunately, as on practically every other similar occasion, parts of the address were missed by those sitting a long way from the platform. Why do we persist in holding our mass meetings in a hall which, time and time again, has been acoustically condemned? There are many other halls in the city with sufficient seating accommodation. Is it that we are too "orthodox" to have our service in a hall belonging to another denomination, or in one of the many picture houses and theatres?

Annual Synod Lecture.

It is not an exaggeration to say that the Rev. W. L. Schroeder's lecture on "Faith and Our Faith" created a deep and profound impression on all who were privileged to be at the First Church on Wednesday evening 19th June. It is a great pity the Church was not filled, and to our mind, a still greater pity that the lecture was not more fully reported in the Ulster daily newspapers. We hope that the smallness of the attendance will not lead Mr. Schroeder to think that the time spent in preparing his lecture and in crossing to deliver it was hardly worth while. The attendance, comparatively small as it was, was larger than those of recent years and the spontaneous expressions of appreciation, both ministerial and lay, bore testimony of the great pleasure the lecture had given. It will be a long time before we forget this excellent presentation of the Unitarian Faith. Those who heard it will no doubt be anxious to read and re-read it in this issue. Those absentees who read it will no doubt wish they had heard it. Our thanks are due to Mr. Schroeder for making us realise more fully, something which we in Ireland are in grave danger of forgetting namely, what a great and noble heritage is ours.

Sunday School Conference.

The Dromore Unitarian Church was packed on Saturday June 1st on the occasion of the Annual Sunday School Conference. In spite of the inclement weather the gathering was as enjoyable as any of recent years. The food for thought provided by the Rev. R. Nicol Cross, M.A., and the food for the body provided by our hospitable Dromore friends were both equally acceptable and nourishing. Fortunately some kind friend had informed Mr. Cross that the Sunday School Conference was not a Sunday School Conference with the result that "The Problem of the Modern Child" was an address appealing not only to Sunday School teachers but to all interested in the spiritual and moral welfare of the young. A short summary of Mr. Cross's admirable address appears elsewhere in this issue.

Congratulations to Mrs. E. Thompson for her lucid explanation of the way in which the competitors in the Essay Competition were judged. At previous conferences we were simply given the names of the prize winners. This year we were told the method of grading and of awarding marks. Consequently we knew **why prizes had been won,** something we had in previous years, simply guessed at. Congratulations to the winners. Will someone explain how it is that out of approximately 1,300 Sunday School scholars belonging to our Church only 29 can be induced to write essays?

Drink and Unemployment.

Several letters on this subject have come to hand, one from a Bournemouth reader who wishes to use last month's "Drink and Unemployment" paragraph as a basis for a temperance pamphlet. For the benefit of others who are particularly interested in this presentation of the drink evil we may repeat that the statistics given in last month's NON-SUBSCRIBER are based on the returns of the Board of Trade and Ministry of Agriculture. These returns, subjected

to a few arithmetical calculations, can be made to speak volumes on behalf of temperence. We might well hang our heads in shame when we remember that if all the money at present expended on the manufacture and sale of alcoholic liquor could be diverted to some of the staple industries, our unemployment problem would be practically solved. While on the subject of unemployment it may be mentioned that the last annual report of the Ministry of Labour shows that unemployment insurance benefit cost over £44,000,000 last year and that the Unemployment Fund Debt, which now stands at £39,000,000, is increasing at the rate of £1,000,000 per month.

No one will pretend that this huge expenditure is not justified by human needs but every sane man will question the economic wisdom of giving a man 17/10 per week (the average payment per head) without asking for an equivalent return in service. The blame lies at the door of society as a whole and not at the door of the unemployed.

"A Servant of God."

It is nothing short of a tragedy that the battle for the control of the Salvation Army was not postponed for a few months. We can all be wise after the event but the wisdom that comes after the passing of General Bramwell Booth savours if not of folly, at least of unnecessarily hasty decisions. The decision to depose the General need never have been made if the leaders who were officiating during the General's illness had exercised a little more patience. However the stirring and touching scenes at the funeral of the deposed Salvation Army Leader showed that he had never been deposed from the high position he held in the hearts and minds of thousands of humble and sincere "privates" in the "Army." Salvationists from all parts of the world paid their tribute to the departed leader. Inscribed on the coffin, upon which rested the General's peaked cap and spectacles together with the Bible opened at the place where he had last read, were the following simple but pregnant words—

Bramwell Booth—General Salvation Army.
Born 8th March, 1856, died 16th June, 1929.
Born of the Spirit, 1863.
A servant of God

Unless there is a revolutionary change in human nature we know what will be inscribed for many years to come on the hearts and minds of his loving and devoted followers and unless this universe is a sham and hollow mockery we know what must be inscribed for ever in the "Book of Life."

William Ellery Channing, (1780-1842).

"Channing—a Study" by Thomas S. Matthews ("Studies" Publications 4/6 net) is one of the few biographies worth reading, giving shelf room and re-reading. The phrase "Intimate but inexact," applied to at least one of the previous efforts to present the life and work of Channing cannot be applied to the present volume. The author deserves the highest praise for so faithfully keeping himself "as far as possible in the background, supplying only the connecting links." This delightful little volume gives us Channing pure and undefiled. We are not given a picture of Channing, we are invited to make a picture ourselves from Channing's own language which, "enabled him to express vividly and clearly the profundity and sublimity of his conceptions.'

On almost every page, between the lines and behind the words, the imagination sees a spiritually refined face with large expressive eyes and hears a wonderfully clear and deeply devotional voice.

To quote almost at random "I sit in this room and shed tears over human misery. I weep over human woe. But do I ever relieve distress? Have I ever lightened the load of affliction? My cheeks reddened as I realised that virtue did not consist in feeling, but in acting from a sense of duty, There is no moral merit in possessing feeling." "Again I must not consider doing good as an accidental pleasure but make it the business of my life" or yet again "It is my misfortune that I have read much but have reflected little. Let me reverse the order."

Channing's sympathetic advice to a young man who had doubts regarding his moral fitness for the ministry, doubts which Channing himself shared early in life, deserves to be ranked as classical. The closing words are indicative of the reverent and sympathetic spirit pervading the whole.

"God might have committed His word to the ministry of Angels but this He has not seen fit to do; He entrusts it to earthern vessels, to frail men, to those who need moral and religious education as truly as

their hearers, who reprove themselves in the reproofs they administer to others and who are to carry others forward by advancing themselves. A deep sense of imperfection and much spiritual conflict are then, inseparable from the work."

What doubting student or disheartened minister could fail to be strengthened and encouraged by such beautiful sentiments so beautifully expressed?

Resisting the temptation to quote further it may be said that a copy of this book should be in the hands of every Christian Humanitarian. It is filled with spiritual refinement, in other words this book about Channing is filled with Channing, an unusual occurence in biographies. Where the author has occasionally intruded he has done so with a graceful charm of manner that dispels all feelings of resentment. His simple yet telling language is worthy of the precious subject.

Unitarians and Liberal Christians generally who feel with Channing that "if Trinitarians would tell us what they mean, their system would generally be found little else than a mystical form of the Unitarian doctrine" would like to have seen this and similar statements of Channing included in the book.

The value of the tributes to Channing at the end of the book would also be enhanced by the inclusion of Bunsen's reference to Channing as "The prophet in the United States for the presence of God in mankind."

However in a book already crowded with good things these are minor criticisms. The same applies to the printer's errors on pp. 22, 23— the latter very glaring.

Mr. Matthews has earned the gratitude of all humanitarians in general and of Unitarians and Liberal Christians in particular. The book is well worth buying, reading, studying and valuing not as an addition to the shelves but as an addition to spiritual life.

S. P. W.

N.B.—Editorial Communications for the future must be sent to the Rev. S. P. Whitehouse 19 Wellington Park Avenue, Belfast.

Phone—Malone 378.

Faith and Our Faith.

By Rev. W. Lawrence Schroeder, M.A.

Annual Synod Lecture.

Faith is a quality of life which in its traffic with the world of men and things may issue in the faith, or body of doctrine which distinguishes a specific church or denomination. Faith as spiritual quality is radical and fundamental. The characteristic faith of a denomination may be secondary : the relation between the two is subtle and profound.....Faith is a conditional quality of progress ; without it the mind of man would falter and grope an uncertain way towards some ill-conceived end. Faith, in its working, involves the recognition of the righteousness of essential life—the assurance that a forward movement is possible because of the divine law or principle at the heart of things.

Faith implies the validity of ideal ends ; the faithful soul moves because of the vision that invites fulfilment. The vision is interpreted by the religious mind as the revelation of the will of God ; for progress in its fundamental elements is a realisation of divine purpose and without the ideal of a greater perfectness of being, the people are as in wandering mazes lost.

Faith serves the unification of life ; it moves from a basis of actualities through lines of possibilities, to the knitting together of events, and the realisation of thought. It is in and by faith that the great discoveries of the world are made : physical, chemical and biological science, geography, philosophy and social reform, with all their amazing revelations of law, witness the functioning of faith in the progressive unifying of existence.

But the motive power of all life is love ; and faith is saturated with love. We think of God as active love, fulfilling Himself in creation, and greatly through the medium of human personality. Faith moves by love, the desire for the beautiful things of the kingdom, for the knowledge that saves and the grace that purifies and strengthens, gives the substance of the faith-activity.

Religion's Great Words.

Love, faith, vision, the knowledge that means eternal life, the realisation of the kingdom—these are the great words of

religion; these are the fundamental things which find some kind of intellectual or doctrinal expression in the creeds which characterise the various churches of the world; the faiths which mark distinctions of apprehension.

Faith is the activity, fundamental and essential, that distinguishes the church of God—the church Catholic, universal, from other great bodies of human achievement and aspiration. Faith moves, of course, in every phase of human activity; but in the church of God it is the abiding and predominant quality; without faith in God as love, and in His law as righteous, and in eternal life as possible here and now, the work of the churches is mean and almost vain; for as Harmack reminded us, the function of the church is to witness to the reality of eternal life in the midst of time.

The way in which the church conceives the working of faith will constitute the faith of that particular church. We may therefore, with propriety, ask concerning the Unitarian way of faith. What is the Unitarian conception of religion, and how does the Unitarian view consort with those of the great religions? What is the distinction of Unitarian Christianity, and in what does it differ from the other faiths of Christendom?

Religion, in essence, is man's enjoyment of God.....it is the consciousness that the Power from which all life flows, has a friendly concern for its issue. Religious methods of approach to God differ greatly according to racial development and culture. The great religions of the world are illustrative of differences of apprehension .....The nature and quality of the truth we possess, will determine the manner of our approach to God. Theology is an intellectual expression of religious experience it is the intelligible form, of which religion—as communion of man with God—is the substance. Rites and ceremonies embody theological elements, and may serve religious experience. Churches exist for the conservation of such elements as are considered necessary to salvation, to the spiritual well-being of man. .....Religion, which is one, expresses itself in an astounding diversity of form. Christianity is distinguished by the belief that Jesus set out in teaching and by example, the most acceptable and truthful method of approach to God; it affirms that Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. But the various Christian Churches differ in the interpretation of that idea, and in the emphasis laid on elements of the doctrine involved.

Distinctiveness of Unitarianism.

Theologically the Unitarians are the most distinctive of all the Christian denominations. This is not to say that they are superior to their Christian brethren, but that they differ from them radically in doctrine. Historically and doctrinally Unitarianism is a repudiation of the doctrine of the Trinity, and a denial that belief in the Trinity is necessary to salvation. .... Jesus was Unitarian in His conception of God

As a modern movement, Unitarianism began with the recognition of Scriptural authority. But, to-day, the Bible is taken for what it is—a collection of books of different ages and of varied value, wherein the history of the development of a nation's relations with God is set out. For the Unitarian, the value of the Bible lies in its embodiment of spiritual experience which reached its highest development in Jesus Christ.....

The authority of the Bible is that of life as we may know it, life that may be tested by rational criticism. The Unitarian has no use for a miraculous Bible..... Many Unitarian congregations find the sources of their ecclesiastical life in the group of freedom-loving men who in the latter part of the 17th century dared the displeasure of the State, and claimed the right to worship according to the movements of heart and conscience.....

Churches of the open trust developed Unitarian ideas. The changes were not often swift, but they were sure, and as the years went by, the doctrines of the Trinity, of a blood atonement, of the deity of Jesus, of a personal devil and eternal torment, of the innate depravity of man, and of the persoanlity of the Holy Ghost, were discarded. Indeed, so radical was the rejection of the body of orthodox belief, that many, mistakenly, thought of Unitarianism as a system of negations.....

Unitarianism Distinctively Christian.

Unitarianism throughout its history has been predominantly Christian, its exponents have based their religious thought and attitude on the teaching of Jesus. The

great contribution to religious experience that Unitarianism has made, has been related to Christ's teaching touching the Fatherhood of God, and the sufficiency of the idea for the religious life. Unitarianism claims that the principles of its religious life are just those which gave meaning and distinction to the work of Jesus; for Jesus questioned the orthodoxy of his day, He exercised freedom of criticism touching the law and traditions of His people, He asserted the soul's right to the immediate presence of God, He proved the supremacy of the spirit in all the affairs of life, and He taught that they who do the will of the Father shall know the truth that saves. He believed in the progressive spiritual life, for He held out the hope that His disciples would do yet greater works than He himself had been able to do.

When Unitarians deny the necessity of any mediatorship between God and man, they find support in the teaching and example of Jesus, who encouraged His disciples to approach God directly in prayer. He never taught them to offer their petitions through him.....

Freedom for Development.

For the Unitarian, as for other liberal religionists, freedom of religious thought has been the essential condition for the evolution of doctrine in harmony with science, with philosophy, and with rational criticism. The variety of theological thought, and of worship, found among Unitarian congregations is sufficient proof of the reality of the freedom enjoyed..... There is no dogma in Unitarianism save that of the being of God and the truth of religion. There are no doctrinal tests of membership.....

At the heart of modern Unitarianism is the conviction that as knowledge grows from more to more, and as experience is intensified and widened, the forms of worship and of theological doctrine must change, not necessarily in the direction of a simpler theism, or of the American type of humanism, but in the line of a richer and more rationalised Christianity. There is a deep reluctance to bind succeeding generations to a perpetuation of any specific form of worship or of belief. Most of our chapels are held in trust simply for the worship of Almighty God.....

It is clear that Unitarianism comes within the range of Sabatier's definition, as a religion of the spirit and as opposed to religions of authority. Unitarianism asserts that the seal of authority is within, and that no external power—institution, book, or person— should take to itself the right to impose forms of belief as conditions of salvation.

Demand for Rational Control.

It further claims that in the ultimate finding, the individual mind must be the arbiter of intellectual and spiritual conclusions, even when the decision reached embodies the acknowledgement of superior authority. But there is all the difference in the world between a rational and a blind obedience. It calls on persons to exercise a rational control over their obedient conduct, and to question the nature of the authority exercised.

In conformity with its rational principles, Unitarianism rejects the dogmatic authority of the Church, of Tradition, of the Bible, and of the Pope; while gratefully accepting what the Church or the Bible or Tradition may offer as the experience of men, and in the way of guidance.

Unitarianism is a method of the religious life, rather than a body of theological doctrine, or an aspect of ecclesiastical polity.....

Religion is regarded as the life with God, which is practically expressed in the life with men.....The Fatherhood of God gets its meaning in the brotherhood of man. Unitarians accept the leadership of Jesus, whom they regard as the blest son of God, but not in any way that separates him from his fellows. Jesus is the assurance of what we by divine heritage are, and what, by divine grace, we may become.....

Unitarians believe in the continued progress of the soul in its seeking after God, they deny any finality in the revelation of the will and purpose of God, they welcome the findings of science and of philosophy, as in some measure, a manifestation of the mind of the Eternal.

Unitarians believe that the law of God is righteous, and that good will ultimately prevail. Good and evil are relative matters—to each other and to the percipient—but sin is a positive thing, and consists in the acceptance and furtherance of that which is regarded as evil.....

Baptism and the service of the Lord's Supper are acceptable to many Unitarians; but it is held that no special sacramental efficacy attaches to the rites as such.....

Simplicity of Worship.

In their religious practices, Unitarians are on the side of simplicity and rationality as against ornate ritual and mystic ceremonial. The mysticism that matters is the prayerful communion of the soul with God, and the intense realisation that the immanent spirit of the universe is divine.

Unitarians would free religion from the fetters of a dogmatic theology, from the tryanny of ecclesiastical tradition, and from the bane of a mere ritual observance; they welcome every contribution that knowledge may make to the progress of man. With perfect confidence in the love of God, and the righteousness of His law, they would press forward to the possession of that truth which sets the spirit free on the uplands of being, where God is the meaning of life, and where joys unspeakable belong to those who love His will to do it.

This faith that Unitarianism means is the crying need of the day. Much is said of the neglect of religious observances, and of the decay of organised religious life. It is true that great dissastisfaction exists in regard to conventional forms of religion; it is true that the old sanctions of morality and religion have lost some of their binding power; it is true that many of the young people of to-day have been captured by the desire for pleasure; but it is not true that folks are satisfied with what they are getting, and with the kind of existence they seem called upon to lead. Men and Women are still passionately interested in the Unseen; they crave to be in some vital relation with that Unseen, and the craving s preparatory of religion proper.....

Unitarianism's Opportunity.

There are many who are out of touch with the organised churches, and are suspicious of a mere othordoxy, but who yet feel the need of ministering to an inner life of the spirit, they are in want of just the kind of rational, thoughtful spiritual power which gives meaning to any effective Unitarianism.

Faith, that quality of spiritual being in which is involved in subtle but unmistakable fashion, the affirmation of God, His unity, His righteounsess, His love, and which in itself, is a claim to the possibility of man's relationship with such a God, is the very soul of Unitarianism, such a soul as moved in the teaching of Jesus, and gave such wondrous power to His life.

It is a high task to which we are called, to help our fellows in their search for spiritual satisfaction, and to exercise an influence which will generate or intensify in their hearts, the assurance that God, the Lord of life, the omnipotent Creator, the power that moves in and through all things, is friendly, and that by His love and grace we may enter into the Kingdom of peace and joy and abiding happiness, and lay sure hands on eternal life.

Proselytism.

I would hazard the opinion that as we become simpler, as more of us contact the deeper roots of our being, religious organisations will lose their significance. To some extent this is happening to-day. But the fever of proselytism keeps a multitude of sects and movements active. Instead of seeking for truth, they are consumed with the passion of fostering the growth of their particular movements. Innumerable fussy secretaries keep records of the numbers in their societies. Their conception of progress is arithmetical. An increased membership is a secretary's triumph. This vulgar lust for numbers is a form of religious militarism, and is a menace to spiritual growth. Yet such is the spirit of our age. The plethora of modern organisations indicates the dominance of the mass mind, and is a sign of superficiality. We are becoming consumed with the conceit that we can "save" others before we ourselves are "saved." Our inner life is being starved while we busy ourselves with external trivialities. Religion is falling into disrepute because organisation has killed the spirit of growth and free search. Leaders, as a rule, are no better than those they profess to teach. They are content to repeat the teachings of "sacred books" instead of making their own spiritual discoveries the basis of their teachings. Even after two thousand years it is not realised that the kingdom of heaven is indeed within us."

W. L. WILMSHURST.

A New Reformation.

The Challenge to Religion.

"The News-Letter" Monday 17th June, 1929.

"Religion and the new Reformation" was the title of an address given by the Rev. R. Nicol Cross, M.A., minister of First Presbyterian Church, Rosemary Street, Belfast, at a service held last evening in the Ulster Hall under the auspices of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland and the Unitarian Laymen's League.

Mr. Cross said that many a time Belfast had been distrubed by the sounding brass and the tinkling cymbals of various kinds of religion, and he could understand if it had got a little mixed about the plan of salvation. Non-Subscribing Presbyterians believed they had something to minister to the mind diseased and to pluck the rooted sorrow from the heart of the world. They believed they could give to a perplexed age some guidance in its search for God, the absolute reality. They were not a big body so far as the Church visible was concerned, but if they could summon into that hall all those who, in mind and heart and sympathy, were with them, the place would not be able to contain the multitude. There were quite a lot of them in other ecclesiastical folds, and if the Unitarian Church could get proportional representation for one day, some of its ministers would think that the millennium had dawned at last. They stood aside from the other large communions but not in a frivolous spirit, or because it was pleasing to be in a small minority. They stood aside because they felt something of the necessity and the urgency which Luther felt when he said—"Here stand I, I can do no other, so help me God."

History, where it had contributed to the sum of human happiness, had been a transition, of movement from the past to the future, from the old to the new. That was true not only of various phases of history but of theology and religion. There were certain epochs when the ear of man seemed to hear the voice of God telling him to go forward. One of these was the Protestant Reformation in the 16th century. It had been said that the Reformation was part of a larger movement than itself. There was a re-discovery of the ancient classics of Greece and Rome, and new learning arose to create an atmosphere in which the tapers of the Church—the Roman Church—would not burn and flickered out.

The Lead of Science.

To-day, he believed, the situation was analogous to that which existed in the 16th century. Science had led the race forward to vaster worlds than Protestant orthodoxy recognised or dreamt of. Many of their old Protestant tapers would not burn in the new atmosphere, and that was the apology of the Unitarians for being where they were. They were heirs of their time and its ideals, and they could not help themselves. They could no longer admit that Protestant orthodoxy had spoken the whole word or the last word of God. The Church had fought against this new learning and knowledge and it had failed, as it was bound to fail, for no Church, whatever its claim or whatever its authority, could stand against the eternal truth of God Himself. They wanted a religion that would be consistent with, in harmony with, all they knew of the world that was round about them. They were face to face with a new reformation, and if religion were to survive it must not repudiate or deny the new knowledge—it must embrace it, and live in the light and not in the dark. That was the great challenge to religion to-day. Had it the faith and courage to adjust itself to the mind of the 20th century or would it bury its head in the sand? Unitarians were not a pack of alarmists trying to create a noise in the world, and they were not the only persons who found themselves at the dawn of a new reformation. Mr. Cross went on to refer to the utterances of certain clergymen in the Anglican Church and the Presbyterian Church of England, remarking that he would not speak of the Irish Presbyterian Church, because it was in a backwater and out of the main flow of theological thought and enlightenment. "A Church that finds truth dangerous," he said, "is a Church already doomed. A Church that will not let its professors speak the truth is dumb to the needs of the age." Not all the fundamentalists of Scotland and Ireland could stop God's mouth with the dust of their creeds. Little systems had their day and old doctrines could not survive.

The Moderator, Rev. W. G. Marsden, presided, and Rev. W. H. Townley Tilson, M.A., took part in the service. Miss L. Victoria Gordon sang a solo, and Mr. Albert Taylor was at the organ.

Sunday School Conference.

The annual Sunday School Conference was held in the Dromore Unitarian Church on Saturday, June 1st. There was an audience of over seven hundred in the church, including about six hundred visitors from the various churches and Sunday Schools in the province.

The opening devotions were conducted by Rev. Alfred Davison, and the Moderator Rev. W. G. Marsden, presided.

Rev. R. Nicol Cross, M.A., Belfast, read a paper on "The Problem of the Modern Child," in which he said it was a sign of grace that such a problem had been discovered, and that the child had become a subject of study. It had previously been considered easy to handle children on the simple principle of castor oil for physical disorders and castigation for moral. Repression and oppression were the methods pursued on the assumption of the infallibility and authority of the parent. To-day this very convenient policy had been undermined, and children, like other classes in the community, had awakened to their rights. They no longer kissed the rod as the appropriate instrument of parental policy, and the cry often heard was that they had got out of control and were without reverence or respect. Mr. Cross argued that the explanation lay not in the inherent wickedness or original sin of the present generation of the young as compared with the past, but was just an instance of the potent influence of suggestion on the young. Modern study was laying new emphasis on this factor as against fixed characters at birth. Lack of reverence, indiscipline, doing what one liked, insistence on one's rights, were marked characteristics of modern society. They were in the air, and children became quickly susceptible to them by suggestion. Let the elders work by carrying the right suggestions in their own ways and habits and ideals—not by commands and prohibitions. It will not do to send children to Sunday School or Church and then get out the motor car or golf clubs. The old kind of authority whose sanctions were force and fear produced a race whose motto was "Safety first." Thinking and doing just as the mass think and do, produced a "herd" morality—not a morality whose sanctions were inherent and reasonable, and therefore free. But the latter is the type which is best and most progressive.

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The terror of God and Hell was the form which the old authority took as the religious field— and not only was it cruel and injurious to the personality of the child, but produced inferior conduct to that which rises out of an attraction to, and admiration of, the good. Education is not merely a matter of definite instruction and inculcation of principles, it is a much subtler, more persuasive affair of mental suggestion; and the Sunday School teacher of to-day must realise the importance of such influence in the sub-conscious mind and spirit of the child as being far more radical and effective.

A vote of thanks to the speaker was proposed by Mr. W. J. Baxter, B.A., Dromore, and to the Dromore congregation for their hospitality, by Rev. Edgar Lockett. This was supported by Rev. S. P. Whitehouse. The visitors were most hospitably entertained to tea by the Dromore congregation, at the close of the Conference. Mrs. E. Thompson presented prizes to the successful candidates in the essay competition, namely Miss E. McCartney, All Souls; Miss E Beattie, Mountpottinger; Master A. McCartney, All Souls; Miss A. McNeill, Larne; Master W. Nelson, Larne; Miss F. Ferguson, Comber; Master A. Murray, Killinchy.

THE BOOK OF NORWOOL.

1. Now there dwelleth in the land of Ire, among the people of Uls, in the city of Bel, in the reign of King Geo, a certain young man who painted on paper with ink like unto a rainbow, yea, even with a pen and brush painted he.

2. And certain of the merchants and priests of that city sought out this young man, and began to question him concerning posters and showcards, and great was their delight for low was the cost thereof.

3. With posters and showcards and price tickets of many colours did he supply their places of business, and great was the merchants' return, even so, their tills overflowed with silver and with copper and with paper of treasure, and the telephone bells and the typewriter bells rejoiced greatly for great was the business thereof.

4. Also with tickets did he supply his people with, even for music and dancing, and the people of his country did rejoice greatly at the work of his hands.

5. Verily, verily this young man of Bel, doth dwell in the street called Manor, and the number of his dwelling place thereof is one hundred and seventy.

NORMAN R. WOOLLEY,

Shop Advertiser,

170 MANOR STREET, BELFAST.

Holidays.

By ULLIN.

Here in Ulster we follow more the customs of Scotland, than those of England, and as a rule July is more the holiday month, than is August. In this beautiful province of ours, we do not need to travel far afield for variety, and for complete change of scenery and surroundings. Those from the country have access to a very fine and important city, that of Belfast, which can provide in convenient space, as much interest and entertainment as any other city in the United Kingdom, and the Twelfth Day as celebrated in Belfast is well-known the world over. In days gone by, it could provide as much excitement as would last one for a life-time.

An American visitor was standing in Donegall Place watching the Orange Procession go by, and asked some one what it was all about. "It's the Twelfth Day!" was the reply. "Yes, I know it's the Twelfth Day, but, what's all this procession about?" "Oh, go home and read your Bible," was the answer.

Could you imagine an Orange band at the head of a Roman Catholic procession, playing party tunes, and everybody marching along in high glee. Yet, such a thing once actually happened in a town in the North of France. The village Padre applied for the band of an Ulster regiment, which was located there, to head a confirmation procession. The bandsmen instantly responded with great glee, and the old familiar tunes, good marching tunes, were never more vigorously played. "Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise," and the Padre and his congregation were delighted with the heartiness of the music and the good-will of the regimental band. But, in the camp afterwards among all ranks, never was there such laughter.

There's a great deal to be said for the saving grace of humour, and since both parties were well pleased, the kindly spirit that was under all the fun, perhaps did more to promote the tolerance that the world stands in need of, than any amount of palaver and fine talk would have done.

The month of July may see many a happy Sunday School excursion. What Sunday School nowadays is going to be

content with having tea and playing games in a field near home? Motor buses have changed all that, and these days we are "far-travelled."

Nature is at her loveliest, and it is really a very beautiful world; but, we are too careless about beauty, we have to learn that Beauty is the very manifestation of God himself, and that we can no more do without it, than we can do without bread.

So let us forget our troubles, "pack them up in the old kit-bag," and for a season give ourselves up to real, pure, clean, wholesome enjoyment, thus fulfilling "the chief end of man," "glorifying God and enjoying Him."

First Presbyterian (Unitarian) Church, Newry.

The devotions in Newry Non-Subscribing (Unitarian) Church on Sunday evening took the form of a children's floral Service, abd attracted a large and interested congregation that included many from the various Protestant Churches in town. The beauty of the Church was greatly added to by the floral decorations, the pulpit in particular being embowered in a setting of many choice and varied blooms. The service was attended by the 1st Newry (Earl of Kilmorey's) Boy Scouts and St. Mary's Company of the Church Lads' Brigade, for whom special seating accommodation was provided. The Rev. G. J. Slipper, the esteemed pastor, conducted the service, which was taken part in by the Sunday School scholars of the Church. Mrs. Slipper presided at the organ, and prior to the opening psalm by the children of the Sunday School ("Let us with a gladsome mind") rendered a voluntary. Miss Minnie Berry read the opening service to which the children gave the responses. The lessons were read by Miss Annie Cunningham and Miss Evlyn Hanna, and the soloist was Mrs. Morris, who sang "O Lovely Flowers" with taste and effect. The hymns by the children were not the least pleasing feature of a bright and happy service that was enjoyed by young and old alike, even the tiny tots contributing.

Preaching from Psalm 119, verse 144, the Rev. Slipper delivered a helpful and appropriate sermon, addressing his remarks chiefly to those who were entering the morning of life. He urged them to pray for that understanding referred to in the text that they might so order their lives as to be worthy followers of their Lord and Master and be prepared to live and die as good Christians.

In conclusion, he thanked the ministers, officers and members of both the Boy Scouts and Church Lads' Brigade for attending the service, which concluded with the Benediction.—(From a Press Cutting).

Unitarians Women's League.

The Ulster District held their Quarterly Meeting on Saturday, June 22nd, at Banbridge. A service held in the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church was conducted by Mrs. G. J. Slipper, of Newry, and at the meeting held later in the Dunbar School, a most interesting paper on "Womanhood through the Ages" was given by Miss Hutton of Belfast. A vote of thanks to these two ladies was proposed by Mrs. Godding (Banbridge) and seconded by Mrs. Ewbank (Mountpottinger). Members were present from Ballycarry, Ballyclare, Comber, Dromore and the three Belfast branches (1st Church, Mountpottinger and Stanhope St.) also friends from Newry. A vote of thanks to the Banbridge branch for their hospitality was proposed by the President of the Ulster District, Mrs. Armstrong and seconded by the Vice-President, Mrs. E. R. Jackson.

York Street Church,

The Congregation marked Mr. Agnew's homecoming by a Bazaar by which about two hundred pounds were raised for the reduction of the debt at present on the Church. The Sale was opened on the first day by Mr. Agnew himself with Rev. A. O. Ashworth in the chair. On the second day the opener was Lord Justice Andrews while Mr. Agnew occupied the chair. On the platform were also Sir Thomas Houston and Dr. James Davison. Mr. David Campbell, B.L., voiced the thanks of the congregation to these gentlemen for coming. A good number of the ministers of our sister Churches were present either at the opening or during the proceedings. It is possible that in the rush of the last few days

some of those who kindly sent us goods and articles did not receive acknowledgement, parcels being opened by different workers. We wish to take this opportunity of thanking all who helped. It was specially pleasing that so many outside our own household of faith came forward with gifts.

The matter of the New Gallery which will give us seating for another hundred people at least as well as a small hall is receiving the attention of the committee, and we hope that in a few weeks the work will have commenced.

The Prayer of the House of Commons.

Almighty God, by whom alone kings reign and princes decree justice, and from whom alone cometh all counsel, wisdom and understanding:

We, Thine unworthy servants, here gathered together in Thy name, do most humbly beesech Thee to send down the heavenly wisdom from above, to direct and guide us in all our consultations:

And grant that, we having Thy fear always before our eyes, and laying aside all private interests, prejudices, and partial affections, the result of all our counsels may be the glory of Thy blessed name, the maintenance of true religion and justice, and the safety, honour and happiness of the King, the public welfare, peace and tranquility of the realm, and the uniting and knitting together of the hearts of all persons and estates within the same in true Christian love and charity one towards another, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

—Prayer with which every sitting Parliament opens.

Sub-Rosa.

The Rose is an emblem of secrecy and silenee, For this reason it was sculptured on the ceilings of banqueting rooms, to remind the guests that what was spoken, while the wine went round, was not to be repeated outside. The ceiling of the banqueting room at Haddon Hall is decorated with roses. In 1526 a carving of the flower was placed over confessionals. Thus the familiar expression, sub-rosa, under the rose, acquires an additional interest.

"The Treasury of Masonic Thought."

Report.

Mountpottinger.—The Annual Floral Service was held on Sunday, June 9th, when the Minister was the preacher. The day not being quite so good as it might have been from the weather point of view, the attendance was a little disappointing, but we were pleased to see friends from other Churches. Once again we have to thank members of the Women's League for decorating the Church with the Flowers so kindly supplied by various friends. The Sunday School and Choir Excursion was this year arranged for Newcastle, the selected date being June 15th. Unfortunately for the comfort of the 60 odd children and adults who made the journey the weather was far from being ideal but the worst part was that those who were only able to make the journey in the afternoon got the full force of the downpour which started towards 4 p.m. and caused a premature retreat to the Tea Rooms. Fortunately there was a subseqent clearance until shortly before train time and whilst being far from what one expects in June it was invigorating to walk on the shore and watch the breakers coming in. A word of praise is due to Mr. L. Watters the Sunday School Secretary who worked very hard to ensure the success of the outing.

The Importance of Non-Subscription.

If you would swim in the swift current, do not bind life to belief but dominate it by reason. When you create beliefs in order to live nobly, life becomes complicated, because then you have to obey certain laws, perform certain rites, to worship Gods, and obey their dictates. For example, you believe that there is—Nirvana or a Heaven and that in order to enter there you must do or not do certain things. You have a belief in something of which you know knothing and then you base your actions on that belief. Whereas if you live nobly you inevitably create a heaven. Life is more important than belief. The fulfilment of life is more important than the development of theories and dogmas.—J. KRISHNAMURTI.

Obituary.

Mrs. Dickson, Ballystockart.

The Congregation of Killinchy has lost an old and valued member in Mrs. Dickson who passed away on May 27th 1929, in her 92nd year. She was the oldest member of the Congregation and one of the chief supporters throughout her whole life. The years of her life were co-eval with our Killinchy Church. As a child Mary Lowry was present with the Lowry family of Ballymacashon at the opening of the new Killinchy Remonstrant Presbyterian Church and was one of the stalwarts of 1864 who heard the Rev. Dr. Montgomery preach on the occasion. She was the widow of Mr. Hugh Dickson of Castle Espie himself a prominent member of our Church. Mrs. Dickson left no issue of her marriage, but was happy in a circle of numerous nephews and neices who cherished her with sincere affection. She was a bond of union uniting several families who had her as a chief centre of attraction. Her interest in our Killinchy Congregation was constant and unremitting and her financial support is gratefully remembered. The funeral was to Killinchy New Meeting House Green where her remains rest along with those of her husband. The Rev. J. G. Davies and D. J. Williams officiated in the house and at the grave-side, in the presence of a large number of friends and acquaintances.

Mr. Robert Milling. Comber.

We regret to record the death of Mr. Robert Milling, which occured at his residence, The Square, Comber, on May 24th. Mr. Milling was a member of an old and highly respected Comber family, and together with his brother, Mr. James Milling, carried on an extensive business in Comber. He was held in high esteem by all who knew him. He endeared himself to his friends by his kindly and courteous nature, and to meet him was always a pleasant experience. He took a keen interest in public affairs and in current movements. He was a fluent public speaker and his words were always well chosen. As a sportsman, he was known far and wide as a gentleman of the highest qualities.

He served for a long period on the committee of the Comber Unitarian Church and was a trustee of some of its funds. His friendly presence will be greatly missed, and we tender to his widow, his brother and other relatives, our deep sympathy, in their bereavement and loss. His remains were laid to rest in Comber Church-yard: The service at the house and at the grave was conducted by the Rev. J. Glynne Davies.

It's Just How You Walk The Way

It isn't the way that is stormy
When the storm-clouds hide the day ;
It isn't the thorns that pierce the feet ;
It's just how you walk the way.

It isn't the lions that linger
With teeth that are keen to slay ;
It isn't the sorrow to-day, to-morrow ;
It's just how you walk the way.

It isn't that crowns await you—
The gold of the rainbow's ray ;
It's only the faith that lives through death ;
It's just how you walk the way.

FRANK L. STANTON.

ANTHANASIUS.

The all-powerful, and all-perfect, and all-holy Word of the Father descending upon all things and everywhere extending His own energy, and bringing to light all things both visible and invisible, knots and welds them into His own being, leaving nothing destitute of His operation. And a certain marvellous and divine harmony is thus veritably brought to pass by Him.

ANTHANASIUS.

ENEMY OF FREEDOM.

The true enemy of freedom is dead tradition ; living at second-hand ; the enslavement of the life of to-day to the worn-out formulæ of a past age.—KRISHNAMURTI.

BIRTH.

SLIPPER.—On June 6th, at King's Road, Knock, to Geo. Bruce and Nan Slipper (née Moore), a daughter.

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